

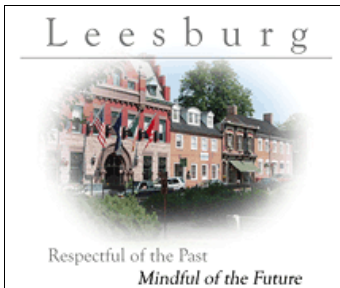
# Leesburg Lowdown: *the 2004 Town Plan*

Town of Leesburg Department of Planning, Zoning and Development

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Volume 1, Issue 2

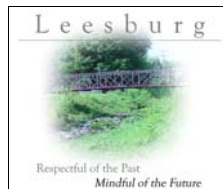
## Visioning Sessions Recap



As a follow-up to the July Sector Meetings, the Leesburg community and other interested stakeholders were invited to four Saturday Visioning Sessions held at Ida Lee Recreation Center in September, October and November. The session topics included environmental, transportation, land use and urban growth issues. Hosted by the Planning Commission, the purpose of these meetings was to educate attendees about the topics, as well as to begin to receive feedback through mapping exercises specific to each issue.



Land Use Visioning Session - October 25, 2003



### Environmental Visioning Session September 13, 2003

Two groups participated in an exercise to determine which environmental resources in Leesburg are stable (or protected), an opportunity (to be protected or to improve

*(Continued on page 2)*

### What you need to know about:

- What happened at the Visioning Sessions?
- Next Town Plan Community Meetings: Who, what, when, where, why?
- Contacts for more information

## Heritage High Seniors Get Involved

In order to hear what Leesburg's youth have to say about how the town should develop, planning staff met with two Government classes at Heritage High School in September. About 45 to 50 Seniors participated in the idea-gathering exercise used previously at the July Sector Meetings. Their top ideas are as follows:

### Class 1 — September 26, 2003

#### Group 1

- 1—Stop building houses and buildings
- 2—Improve traffic and pedestrian flow through town
- 3—Traffic light at each end of Tolbert Road at Evergreen Mill Drive and Sycolin Road
- 4—Parks for people and animals so there is more room for both
- 5—Better bus system with expanded routes and reliability



Group 2 - September 29, 2003

#### Group 2

- 1—Improve transportation for young adults
- 2—Improve entertainment/young Dave and Busters
- 3—Less population growth
- 4—Provide better quality of businesses
- 5—Better parks (link trails)

*(Continued on page 5)*

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Town Plan Website!

[www.leesburgva.org/  
townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan)

a poor condition), or a threat (to loss or degradation). The issues or problem areas identified by the groups are as follows:

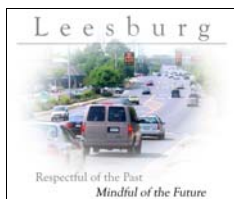
#### Group 1—Inside the Bypass

- Opportunities along Tuscarora Creek
- Steep slopes
- Redevelopment
- Noise from the 7/15 Bypass, industrial uses and the Historic District
- Air
- Habitat
- Open space

#### Group 2—Outside the Bypass

- Preserve Potomac shore
- Implement low impact design because existing design standards conflict with conservation goals
- Coordinating with Loudoun County on open space and environmental issues
- Effect of Battlefield Parkway on green infrastructure and pedestrian connections

*For more details on this exercise as well as more information from the Environmental Visioning Session, please visit [www.leesburgva.org/townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan) and click on Visioning Session—Environmental.*



### **Transportation Visioning Session** October 4, 2003

The three groups that participated in the Transportation mapping exercise answered several questions related to Leesburg's transportation network through drawings and facilitated discussion. The questions and summarized answers are as follows:

1. Should traffic flow and parking downtown be improved in order to accommodate future growth?
  - One-way Market and Loudoun streets should at least be looked at; consider roundabouts as an alternative to signalized intersections; better traffic and parking enforcement and safer designed crosswalks; parking in downtown should remain a municipal function; eliminate surface parking (if must have surface parking, it should be small and dispersed); structured parking with retail is the way to go (ex., Town Hall expansion).
2. Should express bus/rail service along the Greenway be extended to Leesburg?
  - Encourage bus over rail; transit up the Greenway to

Battlefield Parkway — [have at that location] transit park and ride.

3. Should transit service be changed or expanded?
  - Add downtown trolley; provide free downtown local circulator service; free up parking spaces in front of businesses; get commuters and locals to use existing system, make sure future transit is convenient as development occurs; consider paratransit; YES, change and expand local bus service; YES, rail/Metro/bus rapid transit.
4. Should an interchange be built at US 15/Edwards Ferry Road?
  - There is a problem: full interchange at Edwards Ferry Road; interparcel connectivity (car and pedestrian) near the interchange.
5. Should the signalized intersection at the Bypass and Fort Evans Road (the Outlet Mall) be replaced with an interchange?
  - There is a problem: pedestrian overpass; interparcel connectivity (car and pedestrian).
6. Should a new interchange or flyover replace the current Sycolin Road/Bypass signalized intersection?
  - For interim, make improvements to Rt. 7 and the Bypass; ultimately, construct interchange at Sycolin Road and the Bypass; no at-grade intersection solution should be constructed; phasing of Sycolin flyover/overpass with other road construction projects must be considered.
7. What should happen to US 15 north of Leesburg to Maryland?
  - Safety improvements, not volume improvements, add extra lane(s) from Leesburg to White's Ferry Road (push traffic out of Leesburg); another Potomac crossing other than at US 15, bridge at White's Ferry or further east (reconsider Western Bypass?)
8. Should the Town and County cooperatively develop a traffic/infrastructure plan for "build out" of the UGA and access to and from that area?
  - YES, cooperation; Crosstrails Boulevard should be built to Evergreen Mills Road with a traffic signal located at the intersection; Town needs to be proactive and take proposals to Loudoun County, Comprehensive Plan should be written for the UGA and should be publicly presented; use utility extensions into the UGA as a bargaining chip.
9. Should the Town and County cooperatively plan access to and around the expanded airport?
  - YES, priority; support for commercial development around airport; planning of airport connector road; realignment of Crosstrails Boulevard and Sycolin

Road; Consider preparing another Annexation Area Development Plan.

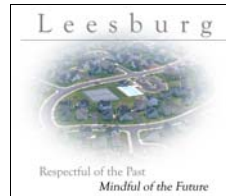
10. How should the Town address growing regional traffic demands?

- Improve functionality of the bypass and road connectivity between neighborhoods and commercial districts; work with VDOT on allocation of funds; implement trail master plan fully.
11. How should the Town address local traffic needs?
- Outlaw cul-de-sacs, strengthen grid system; promote mixed uses and higher densities; redevelop strip malls to more traditional forms (old town Leesburg); additional collector/through road on north-east, near school administration building; consider paratransit; coordinate traffic lights; address bike/pedestrian needs (include schools); increase incentives for bicycles/pedestrians/bus; increase disincentives for cars; land use is integral to traffic.

12. How should the Town address bicycle and pedestrian needs?

- Encourage more bicycle use — either allow bike lanes on sidewalk or create separate lanes, provide connectivity from downtown to all neighborhoods and commercial areas, ped/bike should be linked to transit; make streets safer for pedestrians — use brick-impressed asphalt crosswalks, provide separation between sidewalk and traffic by providing street-scaping, Town to develop a campaign to promote and endorse safer pedestrian travel; bicycle/pedestrian network is integral to the transportation system.

*For more details on this exercise as well as more information from the Transportation Visioning Session, please visit [www.leesburgva.org/townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan) and click on Visioning Session—Transportation.*



## Land Use Visioning Session

October 25, 2003

Staff identified six sites in Leesburg (see map below) to be studied by three groups of attendees. The questions posed to these groups for each site were: 1) How should the land uses on these sites be accommodated; and 2) How should this site be connected to the surrounding area? Summaries of the answers to the former question follow:

Downtown Site 1 — Barber and Ross site (NE quadrant of the intersection of Harrison Street and Catoctin Circle)

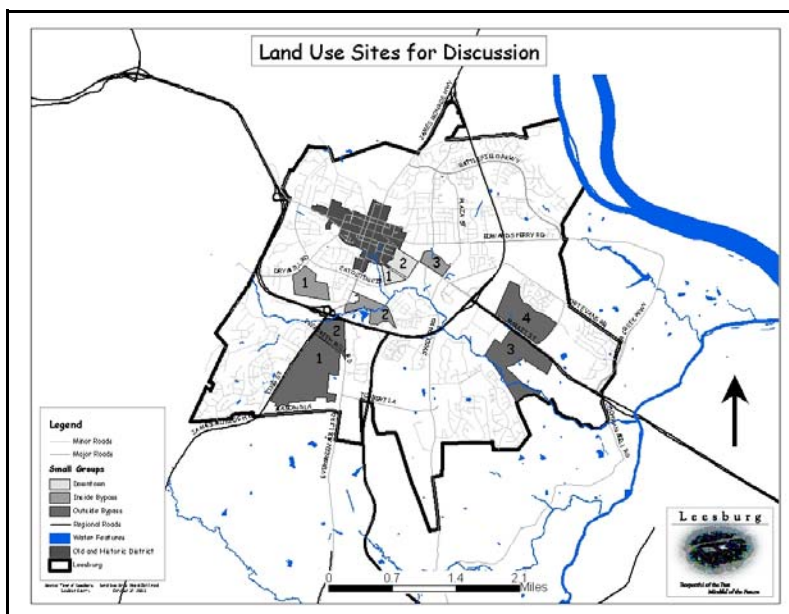
- Mixed use, dense; amphitheater and/or community gathering place/focal point; office, typical in row-house style buildings; residential, above business and row house; retail.

Downtown Site 2 — SW quadrant of the intersection of East Market Street and Catoctin Circle

- Mixed uses similar to those listed for Site 1 with higher density of mixed uses (more office/commercial space) along Market Street and Catoctin Circle transitioning towards the southwest corner of the site, and a satellite college campus mixed in with varying degrees of residential use (ex., Harvard Square in Cambridge, MA)

Inside Bypass Site 1 — Rogers Farm (Dry Mill Road at Lee Avenue)

- Mix of residential, non-residential and open space: *Residential* — Mixed types of dwellings, affordable, and denser than one dwelling unit per acre; single family near existing single family on the eastern





edge, townhouses on most of the site located near streets with parking behind (in the interior of the block) with some built as live/work units with office space below two floors of residential, multi-family (maybe senior housing) across Lee Avenue from the Baptist Church

**Small Commercial/Retail Space** — First-floor uses with offices or residences above; up to about 1,000 square feet per business; located near the existing office uses, centrally located on the site, or on Dry Mill Road near the high school (for businesses oriented to students' needs).

**Small Office** — First- or second-floor uses with residences above; up to about 10,000 square feet per business; located in the same places as the commercial/retail space.

**Open Space** — Located at the stand of trees, could be used by adjacent schools for environmental education; provide within residential blocks and in traffic circles; build some streets with landscaped medians and edges.

**Internal Streets** — Gridded organization with blocks measuring 400-500 feet long to encourage walking; all streets should be two lanes wide and designed for slow speeds and sidewalks; bus route should have at least one stop on the site at a centrally-located commercial/office block.

**Outside Bypass Site 1** — West of Rt. 15 South, East of Evergreen Mill Road, North of Masons Lane, Adjacent to Evergreen Mill Elementary School

- Campus-style research and development community set in center of site with significant buffers; plan neighborhood commercial and retail uses (banks, dry cleaners, restaurants) set close to the street along extended Country Club Drive and Meade Drive, also along S. King Street; centrally-located parking behind commercial on S. King Street that would share parking with research and development campus; additional considerations: walkability, consideration for adjacent residential properties, environmental concerns (landscaping, water resource(s) and quality, impervious surfaces and smaller building footprints, outdoor classrooms, green buildings and open space; planting trees)

**Outside Bypass Site 3** — South of Rt. 7 East, Adjacent to Town Water Treatment Plant and W&OD Trail

- Move auto center from Catoctin Circle to east half of Rt. 7 frontage, south of (future) Battlefield Parkway which will allow for better quality/walkability in the Catoctin Circle area — create an autopark similar to the Dulles AutoPark located on Rt. 50 west of Rt. 28; expand university/higher education on west half of

Rt. 7 frontage, north of (future) Battlefield Parkway; open space along the length of the site adjacent to the W&OD Trail and Tuscarora Creek to provide a buffer to residential properties; office and/or research and development campus-style community north of (future) Battlefield Parkway to the southwest of the university/higher education site; site will be at the entrance to Leesburg so it should look nice

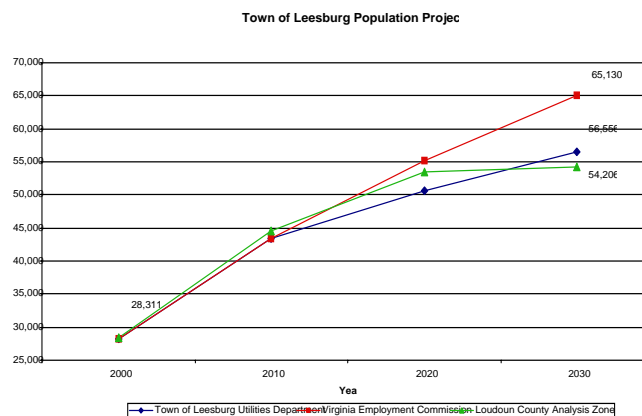
**Outside Bypass Site 4** — North of Rt. 7 East, West of (future) Battlefield Parkway, adjacent to Leesburg Outlets and Evans Ridge Apartments

- Plan for commercial uses, not industrial

For more details on this exercise as well as more information from the Land Use Visioning Session, please visit [www.leesburgva.org/townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan) and click on Visioning Session—Land Use.

## Excerpts from Land Use Visioning Session Presentation

### Growth Trends & Forecasts - Leesburg



## Compare and Contrast

### Conventional



### Traditional



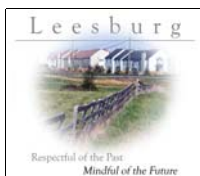
## East Cornwall Street



**Contemporary Suburban Residential**



**"New Urbanism" Infill Residential**



### Urban Growth Issues Visioning Session November 15, 2003

"Given projections for a doubling of population and jobs in the town in the next 30 years, how can the growth be accommodated so as to maintain a high quality of life in the town and also avoid sprawl?" was the question three groups answered at the Urban Growth Issues Visioning Session. The groups reconvened in the afternoon, where they shared the results of the small-group exercise. The

groups agreed that a major emphasis should be placed on mixed-use and higher density development (especially within the town limits), and that they were satisfied with the existing western edge of the town area (the Catoctin Ridge). One group found mass transit to be important. Two of the three groups limited their discussion to within the existing urban growth area, while one group promoted creating villages along the Dulles Greenway corridor south of Sycolin Creek. Several people also mentioned that the updated Town Plan should look ahead to the time when Leesburg is "mature" like Fairfax City and Falls Church.

*For more details on this exercise as well as more information from the Urban Growth Issues Visioning Session, please visit [www.leesburgva.org/townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan) and click on Visioning Session—Urban Growth.*

*(Continued from page 1)*

#### Group 3

- 1—More convenient road network (spend less time in traffic)
- 2—Modernize traffic lights in Historic District (King & Market St.); allow left turn signal
- 3—Larger, greener central park
- 4—After school and weekend activities for kids and teens (both public and private)
- 5—Sight distance (review DCSM) - inadequate in many areas throughout town

### Class 2 — September 29, 2003

#### Group 1

- 1- More places for youth to hang out (movies, clubs, restaurants, arcades)
- 2—More road shortcuts for easier access to destinations
- 3—Only allow a small amount of industrial growth
- 4—Slow development to save the environment
- 5—Bring Metro, buses and light rail to Leesburg

#### Group 2

- 1—Commercial buildings built must be attractive with better upkeep and quality
- 2—Stop building commercial buildings in residential areas
- 3—Control traffic flow between Heritage High School and Simpson Middle School
- 4—Attract more minorities to Leesburg
- 5—More lights and stronger fences on trails

#### Group 3

- 1—Ease congestion—more connecting roads (ex. 15 Bypass, King St, Tolbert Ln. & Evergreen Mill Rd, Rt. 7)
- 2—Bigger parks like Algonkian, not playgrounds
- 3—Put up light at Tolbert Ln. & Evergreen Mill Rd. or a 3-way stop
- 4—Better roads (pavement)
- 5—No mass transit (don't expand existing)

Staff will continue to work with these students throughout the school year. In January we will conduct exercises similar to the Visioning Session mapping exercises with the same students.

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L e e s b u r g



Respectful of the Past  
*Mindful of the Future*

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO  
COMMENT, PLEASE VISIT  
[WWW.LEESBURGVA.ORG/TOWNPLAN](http://WWW.LEESBURGVA.ORG/TOWNPLAN)

***Keep an Eye Out!***

- Who?*** YOU! Residents, Leesburg business owners, and anyone else interested in Leesburg's future!
- What?*** For the next round of Town Plan meetings, to tell us if we're on or off track with the scenarios we've come up with based on your input thus far...
- When?*** Late Winter/Spring
- Where?*** To be determined
- Why?*** Because it's *your* Town Plan, and we need you to tell us how to write it!

*Please check the website often for updates at [www.leesburgva.org/townplan](http://www.leesburgva.org/townplan),  
or call the Comprehensive Planners at 703-771-2765!*

***Respectful of the Past, Mindful of the Future***